

**MINNESOTA JUDICIAL BRANCH**  
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**TO:** Secretary of the Senate  
Chief Clerk, House of Representatives  
Legislative Reference Library

**RE:** Minn. Stat. §§ 626A.17, subd. 3, 626A.42, subd. 5(b)  
Report to Legislature by the State Court Administrator

Minnesota Statutes chapter 626A governs the application for and issuance of warrants and orders for the interception of communications, the use of pen register, trap and trace, and mobile tracking devices, and for electronic device location information.

Minn. Stat. § 626A.17, subd. 1, requires that within 30 days after the expiration of an order granting or denying an application under chapter 626A, or each extension thereof, or the denial of an order approving an interception or the use of a pen register, trap and trace device, or mobile tracking device, the issuing or denying judge shall report to the state court administrator:

- (1) the fact that an order or extension was applied for;
- (2) the kind of order or extension applied for;
- (3) the fact that the order or extension was granted as applied for, was modified, or was denied;
- (4) the period of interceptions or use of a pen register, trap and trace device, or mobile tracking device authorized by the order, and the number and duration of any extensions of the order;
- (5) the offense specified in the order or application, or extension of an order;
- (6) the identity of the applying investigative or law enforcement officer and agency making the application and the person authorizing the application; and
- (7) the nature of the facilities from which or the place where communications were to be intercepted or activity under the order was to be carried out.

Similarly, Minn. Stat. § 626A.42, subd. 5(a), requires that for applications for electronic device location information tracking warrants under section 626A.42, the issuing or denying judge shall report to the state court administrator:

- (1) the fact that a tracking warrant or extension was applied for;
- (2) the fact that the warrant or extension was granted as applied for, was modified, or was denied;
- (3) the period of collection authorized by the warrant, and the number and duration of any extensions of the warrant;
- (4) the offense specified in the warrant or application, or extension of a warrant;
- (5) whether the collection required contemporaneous monitoring of an electronic device's location; and
- (6) the identity of the applying investigative or peace officer and agency making the application and the person authorizing the application.

Minn. Stat. §§ 626A.17, subd. 3, and 626A.42, subd. 5(b), require the State Court Administrator (SCAO) on or before November 15 of each even-numbered year to file with the legislature a report concerning (1) all warrants and orders authorizing the interception of communications and the use of a pen register, trap and trace device, mobile tracking device, or other electronic or mechanical device, and all tracking warrants authorizing the collection of location information during the two previous calendar years and (2) all applications that were denied during the two previous calendar years. Each report shall include a summary and analysis of the data required to be filed by Section 626A.42, which requires reporting on electronic device location information warrants. The reports required under sections 626A.17 and 626A.42 were combined for purposes of this year's report. The required data is presented in Tables 1 – 6 on pages 4 – 6 of this report.

During the reporting period, the majority of warrants/orders reported to SCAO authorized the installation of pen register or mobile tracking devices, followed by some combination of these two kinds of warrants/orders with trap and trace devices, and/or the tracking of electronic device location information. Those warrants/orders are identified in Table 2, "Kind of Warrant/Order," as "Pen Register, Trap and Trace, Electronic Device Location Information." Warrants authorizing the use of multiple technologies under chapter 626A are considered to be governed by all applicable statutes simultaneously. All of the warrants authorizing the installation of pen register and trap and trace devices, and/or the tracking of incoming and outgoing calls and/or texts, as well as the tracking of electronic device location information are presumptively sealed under Minn. Stat. § 626A.37, subd. 4. Additionally, as required by section 626A.08, subdivision 2, applications made and warrants issued under chapter 626A are required to be sealed by the judge and may only be disclosed upon a showing of good cause before a judge of the district court.

In order to comply with the reporting requirement in section 626A.42, warrants that authorized only the tracking of electronic device location information are identified separately in Table 2, "Kind of Warrant/Order," as "Electronic Device Location Information." Although the warrants are identified separately as "Electronic Device Location Information" warrants, SCAO did not receive any reports of warrants for contemporaneous monitoring of electronic device location information that did not invoke other applicable provisions of chapter 626A, most commonly Minn. Stat. § 626A.37, subd. 4, or of federal law. SCAO has not identified any warrant under seal during this reporting time period that is governed solely by 626A.42 and that was required

by statute to be unsealed after a certain period of time.<sup>1</sup> As stated above, warrants citing other governing law are considered to be governed by all applicable statutes simultaneously, and as required by sections 626A.37, subd. 4, and 626A.08, subd. 2, applications made and warrants issued under chapter 626A are sealed.

As noted on previous reports, SCAO's reports reflect only information received from the district courts concerning warrants issued. No denials of applications for a warrant or order were reported to SCAO. During this reporting time period, a new reporting method was fully instituted that improved the accuracy, completeness, and quality of the reported data. Any increase in the number of warrants reported for this time period likely reflects an increase in the completeness of the reporting, rather than an actual increase in the number of warrants issued.

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<sup>1</sup> Warrants that seek electronic device location information records from a provider for a period of time in the past, as opposed to contemporaneous monitoring for a period of time in the future, are typically filed in the court's public criminal search warrant file after execution and are never filed under seal. Although it is not clear, warrants that seek provider records regarding electronic device location information may arguably be governed by section 626A.42; however, because these warrants are not captioned as section 626A warrants, and are filed as public criminal search warrants after execution, they are not identified as reportable under section 626A.42 and are not reflected in this report.

**Table 1. Warrants issued under Minn. Stat. Chapter 626A, by Judicial District, 2016-2017.**

<b>District</b>	<b>Total Count</b>
1	92
2	809
3	56
4	1865
5	10
6	43
7	73
8	26
9	33
10	119
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3126</b>

**Table 2. Warrants issued under Minn. Stat. Chapter 626A, by kind of warrant/order, 2016-2017.**

<b>Kind of Warrant/Order</b>	<b>Total Count that lists a particular kind or combination of kinds</b>
Pen Register only	843
Trap and Trace only	18
Mobile Tracking Device only	614
Electronic Device Location Information only	250
Pen Register, Trap and Trace	167
Pen Register, Mobile Tracking Device	195
Pen Register, Electronic Device Location Information	144
Trap and Trace, Electronic Device Location Information	439
Mobile Tracking Device, Electronic Device Location Information	82
Pen Register, Trap and Trace, Mobile Tracking Device	31
Pen Register, Trap and Trace, Electronic Device Location Information	289
Pen Register, Trap and Trace, Mobile Tracking Device, Electronic Device Location Information	12
All Other Combinations <sup>2</sup>	18
Unspecified to SCAO <sup>3</sup>	24
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3126</b>

<sup>2</sup> “Other” combinations with less than four count of each: Pen Register, Other Kind; Wiretap Interception of Communication, Other Kind; Pen Register, Trap and Trace, Other Kind; Trap and Trace, Mobile Tracking Device; Pen Register, Trap and Trace, Mobile Tracking Device, Wiretap Interception of Communication, Electronic Device Location Information, Other Kind; Other Kind only; Wiretap Interception of Communication, Electronic Device Location Information; Pen Register, Trap and Trace, Electronic Device Location Information, Other Kind.

<sup>3</sup> Data included in this report was provided to the State Court Administrator’s Office (SCAO) by individual judicial districts. A small number of warrants reported to SCAO did not specify one or more of the required pieces of data.

**Table 3. Warrants issued under Minn. Stat. Chapter 626A, by communication mode, 2016-2017.**

<b>Communication Mode Tracked</b>	<b>Total Count that lists a particular mode (warrants may list more than one mode)</b>
Phone/Cell Phone	1766
Social Media	683
Motor Vehicle	630
Other Communication Mode <sup>4</sup>	38
Unspecified to SCAO	24

**Table 4. Warrants issued under Minn. Stat. Chapter 626A, by offense specified in the order or application, 2016-2017.**

<b>Offense</b>	<b>Total Count that lists a particular offense (warrants may list more than one offense)</b>
Narcotics	1508
Homicide	234
Sex Crime	212
Kidnapping	24
Assault	327
Property	438
Weapon	286
Other Offense <sup>5</sup>	595
Unspecified to SCAO	47

<sup>4</sup> Examples of “Other” communication modes include: Email and live.me.

<sup>5</sup> Examples of “Other” offenses include: Terroristic threats; Deprivation of custodial or parental rights; Fugitive/Escapee; Warrant for arrest; Warrant relating to locating witnesses.

**Table 5. Warrants issued under Minn. Stat. Chapter 626A, by duration specified in the order, 2016-2017.**

<b>Order Duration</b>	<b>Total Count</b>
Greater than 90 Days	5
61-90 Days	87
31-60 Days	2878
0-30 Days	96
Other Duration <sup>6</sup>	8
Unspecified to SCAO	52
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3126</b>

**Table 6. Warrants issued under Minn. Stat. Chapter 626A, by type of investigative or law enforcement agency making the application, 2016-2017.**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Total Count</b>
County Sheriff	517
Federal	787
Police	1388
State Agency	180
Task Force	242
Unspecified to SCAO	12
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3126</b>

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<sup>6</sup> “Other” durations: 06/01/2016 through date of compliance, date of compliance, not stated in warrant, until device can be sealed as evidence, until device is located, until LEC has identified the Target Cellular Device, and 60 days and 30 days back.